

REMARKS

Claims 1-22 are pending in the above-cited application. Applicants respectfully request the reconsideration of the above-cited application. The amendments to the claims are made for clarity and not for purposes of patentability.

35 U.S.C. § 103

Examiner rejects Claims 1-22 “under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Potter et al.” Examiner states that “Potter et al. (U.S. 5,951,011) discloses methods of progressive jackpot gaming wherein players are offered multiple chances to enter into a progressive jackpot wagering game during each hand.” Examiner goes on to state that Potter et al. discloses all the elements of Claims 1, 5-8, 15, and 19. With respect to Claims 2-4, 9-14, and 16-18, Examiner states that “it would have been obvious, to one having ordinary skill in the art, at the time of the applicant’s invention, to simulate Potter’s card game in a slot machine.”

Firstly, the Potter et al. disclosure is strictly limited to games involving cards. Hence, as will be explained, Potter et al. fail to teach all of the elements of Applicants’ Claims 1 and 15. Potter et al. do not disclose the elements of a slot machine, including “a display portion displaying a plurality of rotatable reels, each reel having a plurality of symbols on its periphery, and displaying rotating said reels and stopping said reels such that at least one symbol on each reel is displayed to a player across at least one payline” Furthermore, it would be inconsistent to use a slot machine with a “plurality of rotatable reels” and “at least one payline” with the invention disclosed by Potter et al. The Potter et al. “invention provides the players with one or more opportunities to enter the Progressive Jackpot wagering game, *after viewing portions of their hand,*” which would not be done on a slot machine with a

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“plurality of rotatable reels” and “at least one payline.” Potter et al., col. 3, lns. 22-25 (emphasis supplied). Note that Applicants’ “rotatable reels” include reels displayed on a display screen.

Additionally, Potter et al. does not disclose the elements “said first jackpot being enabled for winning by a player betting a first monetary amount and obtaining a jackpot symbol combination across an activated payline, said second jackpot being enabled for winning by said player betting a second monetary amount and obtaining a jackpot symbol combination across an activated payline,” recited in Claims 1 and 15. In the Potter et al. invention, “the amount of the Progressive Jackpot that a player with a qualifying jackpot hand rank would be entitled to would be based on the rank of their hand and how many Progressive Jackpot wagers that the player placed.” Potter et al., col. 6, lns. 5-8. Thus, and as is additionally illustrated in Potter et al.’s Table C, any additional wager in the Potter et al. invention merely increases the percentage of the potential Progressive Jackpot payout. Potter et al., col. 6, lns. 15-34. Furthermore, as Potter et al. states:

All payouts are deducted from Progressive Jackpot account, with the exception of payouts over 100%. If a player achieves a payout of 105%, or 120%, the player will receive the amount on Progressive Jackpot readout 30, plus 5% or 20% respectively. This 5% or 20% will be deducted from the Super Progressive Jackpot account.

Potter et al., col. 7, lns. 17-22.

Therefore, Applicants’ Claims 1 and 15, which recite “said first jackpot being enabled for winning by a player betting a first monetary amount and obtaining a jackpot symbol combination across an activated payline, said second jackpot being enabled for winning by said player betting a second monetary amount and obtaining a jackpot symbol combination across an activated payline,” are distinct from Potter et al.

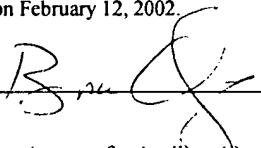
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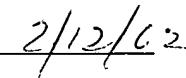
Claims 2-14 (dependent from Claim 1) and Claims 16-22 (dependent from Claim 15) are allowable for at least the same reasons. Moreover, with respect to Claim 7, Potter et al. does not disclose “said award identifier identifies a payment to said player of said second jackpot, but not said first jackpot,” as Examiner incorrectly states. Potter et al. discloses an invention where “[a]t all times, Super Progressive Jackpot readout 32 will display the sum of the amount shown on Progressive Jackpot [first jackpot] readout 30 and the amount of the Super Progressive Jackpot [second jackpot] account.” Potter et al., col. 7, lns. 13-16. Furthermore, Applicants’ respectfully submit that Potter et al. does not disclose a third jackpot such as that disclosed in Applicants’ Claim 8.

For the above reasons, Applicants believe that all pending claims are allowable over all prior art of record, and thus respectfully request their allowance. If Examiner has any questions regarding the above, Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned Attorney for Applicants at (408) 453-9200.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231, on February 12, 2002.

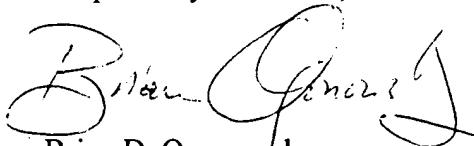


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Respectfully submitted,



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Version with markings to show changes made

IN THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 has been amended as follows:

1. (Amended) In a gaming system having [a monetary unit detector,] a display portion displaying a plurality of rotatable reels, each reel having a plurality of symbols on its periphery, [a controller for] and displaying rotating said reels and stopping said reels such that at least one symbol on each reel is displayed to a player across at least one payline, an improvement comprising:

a plurality of progressive jackpots comprising at least a first jackpot and a second jackpot, said first jackpot being enabled for winning by a player betting a first monetary amount and obtaining a jackpot symbol combination across [any] an activated payline, said second jackpot being enabled for winning by said player betting a second monetary amount and obtaining a jackpot symbol combination across [any] an activated payline; and

an award identifier identifying a payment to said player for winning combinations of symbols, including one or more of said jackpots for a jackpot symbol combination.

Claim 15 has been amended as follows:

15. (Amended) A method performed by a gaming system having [a monetary unit detector,] a display portion displaying a plurality of rotatable reels, each reel having a plurality of symbols on its periphery, [a controller for] and displaying rotating said reels and

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stopping said reels such that at least one symbol on each reel is displayed across at least one payline, said method comprising:

causing a first jackpot to be enabled for winning by a player betting a first monetary amount and obtaining a jackpot symbol combination across [any] an activated payline;

causing a second jackpot to be enabled for winning by said player betting a second monetary amount and obtaining a jackpot symbol combination across [any] an activated payline; and

identifying an award payment to said player for winning combinations of symbols, including said first jackpot or said second jackpot, or both, for a jackpot symbol combination.

Claim 21 has been amended as follows:

21. (Amended) The method of Claim 15 wherein said gaming system comprises a single slot machine, wherein said first jackpot and said second [seconnd] jackpot are uniquely associated with said single slot machine.

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